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issue 38, volume 84 www.newbuffalotimes.com Thursday, September 25, 2025

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SO FAR, SO GOOD...

RAIDERS IMPROVE TO 4-0 IN HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL

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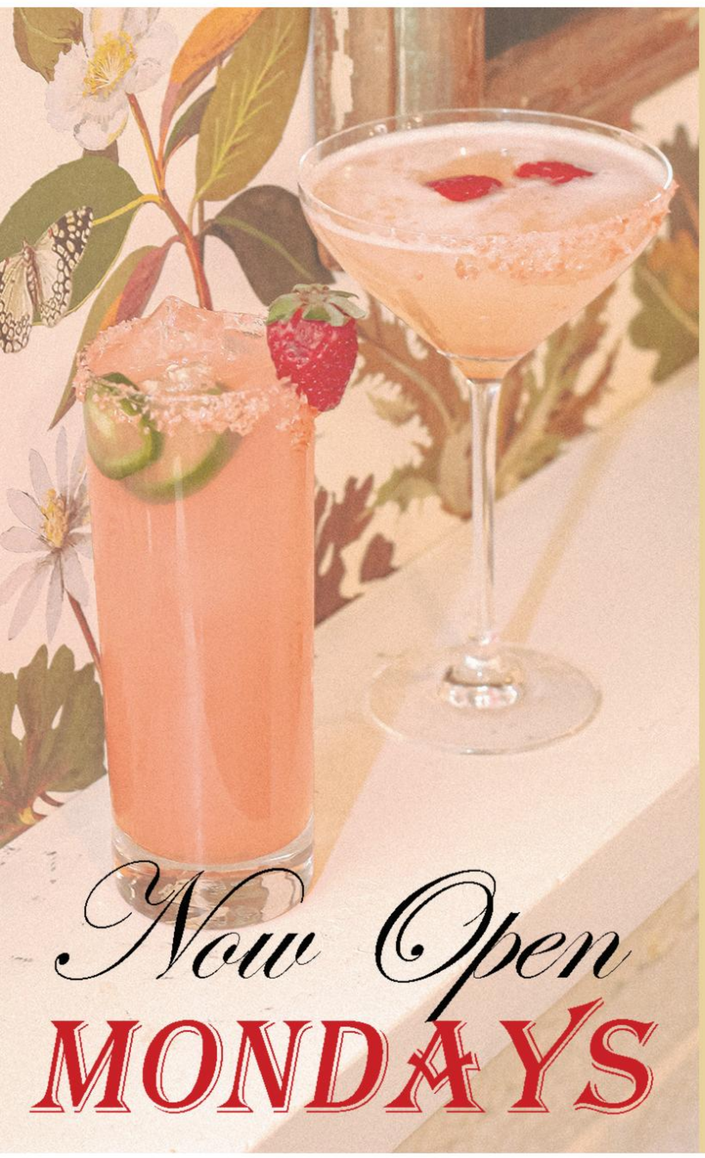

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PUBLICATION NUMBER 377960
CIRCULATION 5,000+ WEEKLY

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Berrien County Health Department shares tips on bat safety and rabies prevention

As cooler evenings arrive and bats seek warmer shelter indoors, the Berrien County Health Department is reminding residents how to respond safely to potential bat encounters and reduce their risk of rabies.

In Michigan, bats remain the most common carriers of rabies. The chances of humans encountering bats increases as the animals move toward hibernation in the fall. Rabies is a rare but severe viral illness that affects the brain and nervous system. Once symptoms begin, the disease is nearly always fatal.

"Rabies prevention requires quick action," BCHD Epidemiologist Sara Palmer said. "Because the disease is almost always fatal, it's important that anyone who may have had contact with a bat try to safely capture it and seek medical attention right away. Our team is here to help connect community members with preventive treatment and animal testing that might be needed."

"Rabies prevention requires quick action," BCHD Epidemiologist Sara Palmer said. "Because the disease is almost always fatal, it's important that anyone who may have had contact with a bat try to safely capture it and seek medical attention right away. Our team is here to help connect community members with preventive treatment and animal testing that might be needed."

Rabies spreads when saliva or nervous system tissue from an infected animal enters the body – most often through a bite, scratch or contact with the eyes, mouth or an open wound. Each year, tens of thousands of people in the U.S. seek medical care after possible rabies exposure.

So far this year, BCHD has been made aware of 24 bat bites or scratches to humans. Fifteen of the bats were sent for testing, and one this summer was positive for rabies.

Rabies symptoms may include insomnia, anxiety, confusion, hallucinations, agitation, trouble swallowing and partial paralysis, which progresses into coma and then death. Once symptoms develop, there are no effective treatments.

If you wake to find a bat in your bedroom or discover one in a room with a child, someone who is sleeping or a person with impaired judgment, treat it as a possible rabies exposure – even if no bite is visible. Bat teeth are extremely small, and wounds can go unnoticed.

If you've been potentially exposed, wash any bite or scratch thoroughly with soap and water, then contact your health care provider immediately. Do not release the bat. Testing is the best way to determine whether treatment is necessary.

If possible, capture the bat without harming it. You will need heavy gloves, a small box or container, sturdy cardboard or a thin board and tape.

To safely capture a bat for testing:

- Put on thick gloves before attempting to capture the bat.
- Wait for the bat to land.
- Slowly approach and place a small container over the top of the bat.
- Slide the cardboard or cutting board under the container, trapping the bat inside.
- Once the bat is in the container, securely tape the container shut so it cannot escape.
- Place a few very small holes, less than a quarter inch in size, in the container to keep the bat alive.

Contact Berrien County Animal Services at 269.927.5648 between 8:30 a.m. and 4 p.m. Monday through Friday to receive instructions on next steps. After hours, call Berrien County Dispatch's non-emergency line at 269.983.3060.

The bat will be sent to the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services for testing, and the results will be available within five days. Once the results are received, BCHD will work with you to determine if post-exposure treatment is needed.

Any mammal can be infected with rabies. Other common carriers include raccoons, skunks and foxes. You can prevent your risk of exposure to rabies by avoiding contact with wild animals. Never approach, touch or feed wild animals. If you store food outside, keep it in a sturdy container with a tight-fitting lid.

You can make your home less accessible to wild animals by installing a chimney cap and sealing openings larger than a dime around your home, such as attics, crawl spaces or areas under your porch or deck.

For more information on rabies and safely capturing bats, visit www.bchdrabiesprevention. — STAFF REPORTS

I don't trust emotions, emotions get analyzed. — *Dino N. Fatouros*

Local Government Meetings

New Buffalo Times

Democracy Requires Transparency

CITY OF NEW BUFFALO
VANCE PRICE, MAYOR
CITY COUNCIL
MARK ROBERTSON, ROGER LIJEWSKI, KAREN GEAR, RICH KNOLL, VANCE PRICE
City Council meets on the 3rd Monday of each month at 6:30PM
CITY OF NEW BUFFALO PLANNING COMMISSION MEETINGS
Meets on the 1st Tuesday of each month at 5:30PM
NEW BUFFALO TOWNSHIP BOARD
HOWARD MALES, MICHELLE HEIT, MICHELLE HANNON, PATTY IAZZETTO, BARBARA ANDERSON
Board meets on the 3rd Monday of each month at 4PM
NEW BUFFALO TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
Meets on the 1st Tuesday of each month at 6:30PM
SHERIFF BERRIEN COUNTY
Sheriff, Chuck Heit
Undersheriff, Greg Sanders
NEW BUFFALO AREA RECREATIONAL AUTHORITY
Meets at 10AM on the 2nd Wednesday of every other month (odd) at New Buffalo Township Hall, 17425 Red Arrow Highway New Buffalo
NEW BUFFALO AREA SCHOOLS BOARD
LISA WERNER, JOHN HASKINS, DENISE CHURCHILL, JENNIFER SUMMERS, VANESSA THUN, STEPHEN DONNELLY, GREG VOSBERG
The Board meets on the 2nd and 4th Mondays of each month at 6PM
CHIKAMING TOWNSHIP
CHIKAMING TOWNSHIP BOARD
DAVID BUNTE, PAULA DUDIAK, LIZ RETTIG, RICHARD SULLIVAN, ARTHUR ANDERSON
Chikaming Board meets on the 2nd Thursday of each month at 6:30PM
CHIKAMING TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
Meets on the 1st Wednesday of each month at 6:30PM
THREE OAKS
THREE OAKS TOWNSHIP BOARD
Meets on the 2nd Monday of each month at 7PM
VILLAGE OF THREE OAKS BOARD
Meets on the 2nd Wednesday of each month at 7PM
GRAND BEACH
Meets on the 3rd Wednesday at 5PM EST
KIMBERLY WOLNIK, CLERK-TREASURER
HARRY WALDER, JACK GRACE, ED SEBASTIAN, PETER DOERR, EDWARD BRANDES
MICHIANA
VILLAGE OF MICHIANA COUNCIL
Meets on the 2nd Friday of each month at 1PM

Short-term rentals discussion persists in the Village of Grand Beach

BY FRANCESCA SAGALA

While no decisions were made, members of the Grand Beach Village Council discussed the ongoing short-term rental concerns that they've been fielding from residents at their Wednesday, Sept. 17, meeting.

Council president Harry Walder said that the changes made to the STR ordinance won't go into effect until Dec. 31, 2025.

While there've been concerns about the number of rentals in the village, Walder said that, currently, there are 52 rentals and that they've "never had that many rentals actually rented at any given point." Based on data collected, the most homes the village had rented all summer was 26, which was the third week of July. At the beginning of the rental season in June and in August, it was five on "any given week."

As was discussed at the Short Term Rental Committee meeting Sept. 12, councilmember Ed Brandes, police commissioner and a member of the committee, said rental volume numbers have decreased from peak numbers in July, with total rentals being 15 and total occupants being 104 as of Sept. 12 and 13. After taking another count on Sept. 17, total rentals were three and total occupants were 12.

Regarding areas where residents were concerned about it being too dense, Walder said that, in areas where there were more rentable homes, two or three homes were being rented.

Three years ago, the village had 63 rentals; now, that number has steadily declined, Walder said.

"Based on all the STR meetings I've been to, based on the Planning Commission meetings I've been to, based on data that has been collected, it seems like the rules that we put in place and amended are actually having an effect," he said.

Brandes said that he thinks a moratorium would be a "solution in search of a problem," adding that he doesn't want to punish residents who "bought a house in good faith on the basis they'd be able to rent their home" responsibly.

The STR Committee's job is to make recommendations to the Planning Commission, which, in turn, makes a recommendation to the council.

Jack Grace asked why, if the number is declining, that the council couldn't put in a moratorium and limit the number of rentals to 55.

Walder said he believes that this would cause people "jumping on the bandwagon" with regards to wanting to rent their homes.

He added that the council can continue the discussion and should wait to take any action on the matter when all five members were present (Pete Doerr and Ed Sebastian were absent).

Joe Reinert said he wants to clarify that he's not opposed to rentals; however, he feels that the STR ordinance needs to be reformed. His concern, he said, is limited to the large, multi-bedroom homes that "have become commercial operations housing up to 16 people.

Reinert added that he's asking the council to put a cap of 50 STRs in the village, reducing the maximum occupancy limit from 16 persons, addressing density and prohibiting bachelor and bachelorette parties.

Ed Burke said the data used on STRs is "inaccurate," as a chart shows the Eiffel Tower area had only eight rentals during July because due to the Exhibit B that was turned in. Data analysis shows there are 10 licensed rentals, which means that on average that only two homes are rented per week.

"You just have to drive through the neighborhood, and you see totally different – there's a lot more rentals," he said.

Jason Milovich, who owns Bluefish Vacation Rentals, said that they take STRs "very seriously" and want to ensure that those who live there full-time or some of the time "are heard." He also suggested that, for individuals who have Air BnB or VRBOS on their own or are represented by a company like Bluefish, there could be someone for residents to call if there's "real trouble."

Blake O'Halloran, who's the Planning Commission's liaison to the STR Committee, said that the STR Oversight Committee monitors Exhibit B, which tells the duration of the rentals, names of the renter and occupant names, as well as an STR email for resident complaints.

He said that four out of the five citations that have been issued by the police have been for not submitting Exhibit B forms, and that he believes that residents are sending in Exhibit B forms.

"I don't know where everybody gets that we need to change the ordinance but what we have done, though, is we've enforced the ordinance we have and it's working," he said.

Grace, who's golf and pro shop commissioner, said he and pro shop manager Don Butler met with the owner of Lam Cam Golf Cart Leasing and Sales in Chesterton and that he recommended the village itself rent or purchase carts to rent out to short-term renters, whether it's a long weekend, a weekend or by the month, through a rental or purchase program.

Rule your mind or it will rule you. — *Horace*

Renting would be $3,800 for the season, which Grace said would "cut into profits year after year" and it would be tough for the village to insure if just renting.

Regarding purchasing a cart, it would be coming off a lease from a country club and would be approximately four to five years old with a brand-new lithium battery. He said those carts are going for $6,000 and would be upgraded from two seats to four, have headlights and turn signals and seat belts. The carts would also be easier to insure if the village owns them.

Between the village's two outside vendors, it's estimated that the village has 30-35 carts there each week during the summer. Grace said this could be a lot of the village's income, rather than just "letting it walk out the door."

Council members agreed to discuss the matter further at the October meeting.

Council members discussed possibly restricting lawn services to the same restrictions as contractors, as several residents have been complaining about the noise lawn services have been making on weekends.

It was acknowledged that some of the work by lawn services can only be done on the weekend.

Grace asked if the start time could be changed to possibly 9 a.m. on Saturdays. Police chief Ryan Layman said he'll verify with the village's attorney if the village can set a time restriction.

Council members discussed possibly increasing the multiplier regarding the village's MERS (Municipal Employees Retirement System) plan from 1.5% to 2.0, which increases the employee and employer contributions. While the current employee contribution is at 2.58%, increasing the multiplier to 2.0% would increase this to 4.0% and would increase the current employer contribution from 6.72% to 8.57%.

It's also proposed that the village's 10-year vesting period be changed to five.

Council members approved the appointment of John Larkin, Paul Leonard and Robert Kegan to the Short-Term Rental Committee.

COLLISION WITH SEMI LOCALLY CLAIMS LIFE OF CHICAGO BICYCLIST

A bicyclist from Chicago was killed when struck by a passing semi-truck near the Michigan state line.

Mason Anderson, 29, was pronounced dead at the scene on Friday, Sept. 19, according to the La Porte County Sheriff's Office.

Anderson was among a group of bicyclists riding southbound on the shoulder of Indiana 39.

Police said the tractor trailer was approaching from behind and veered into the opposite lane of the two-lane highway to safely pass the bicyclists.

That's when Anderson turned left into the path of the semi-truck at County Road 900 North.

In response, police said the truck driver steered further to the left but was unable to avoid Anderson, who was struck by the trailer. Investigators were still waiting for the results of toxicology tests, which is standard procedure in any fatal crash, to determine whether the victim or driver had consumed any drugs or alcohol, police said. — STAN MADDUX

CHURCH OF THE MEDIATOR TO HOST BLESSING OF THE ANIMALS, 'HAUNTED TRAIL'

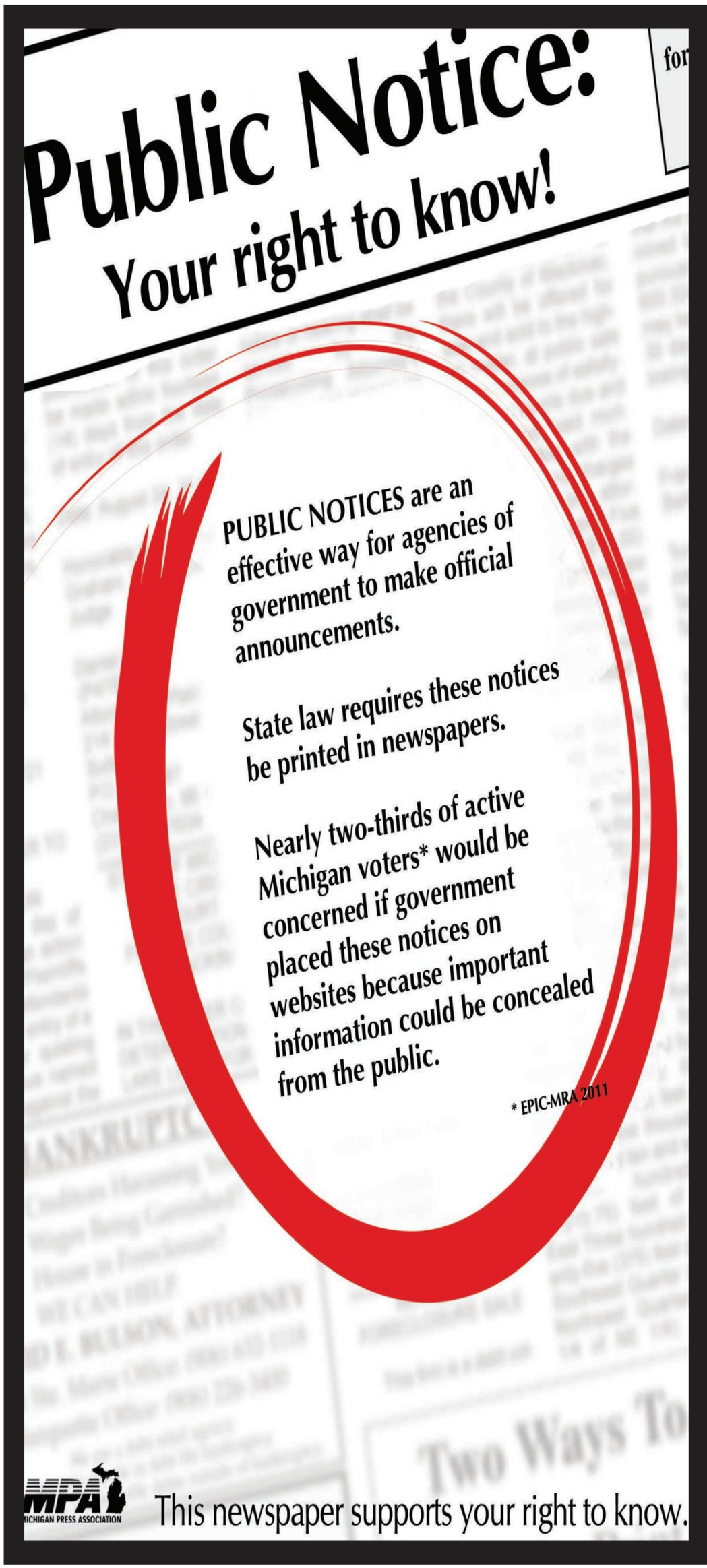
Next month, the Episcopal Church of the Mediator at 14280 Red Arrow Highway in Harbert will be celebrating the annual Blessing of the Animals and a "Haunted Trail."

The Blessing of the Animals, which will take place at 11 a.m. Saturday, Oct. 4, will honor St. Francis of Assisi, the patron saint of animals and the environment. This event is a tradition where pets and other animals receive blessings from clergy, recognizing their importance in people's lives and in God's creation. This event is open to all regardless of religious affiliation and welcomes a variety of animals, including pets, stuffed animals, or pictures of pets. Please make sure live pets are leashed.

The "Haunted Trail" will be on the grounds of the Episcopal Church of the Mediator beginning Oct. 11 through Nov. 1. The trail is a short, easy trail for all ages and is located behind the church building near the labyrinth.

The church will also be hosting an afternoon of "Ghost Stories" from 6-7:30 p.m. Saturday, October 18, at the fire pit, which is also located behind the church building near the labyrinth. The free event for all ages will invite participants to either tell or read a "Ghost" story if they would like. Please bring a chair or blanket for seating.

For more information, contact office@mediatorharbert.com or 269-469-1441. — STAFF REPORTS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SCHOLASTICS

School board hears concerns over Confederate flag display

BY FRANCESCA SAGALA

A small crowd of concerned members of the community showed up at the New Buffalo Area Schools Board of Education's Monday, Sept. 22, meeting, over the apparent display of Confederate flags on school grounds.

In a letter from New Buffalo Area Schools that was included in the recent New Buffalo Elementary School newsletter, it was stated that a "display on a vehicle at student drop-off and pick-up has caused concern from parents and students."

"The free speech rights of students while in school are not the same as the free speech rights of the public. Our sincere hope is that those who visit the District lead by example and model the behaviors we expect from our students," the letter stated.

The district "may only request that individuals refrain from displaying such symbols," the letter stated, and that it'll "continue to ensure NBAS is a safe learning environment for everyone."

Parent MaryClare Bergerson-Lehker said that the two Confederate flags, "given their size, can't be missed."

She added that the flag "perpetrates a continued racism because this flag is used to keep slavery alive and it is still used by white supremacists to symbolize their belief in white superiority."

Bergerson-Lehker said that they're creating "divide and hostility at an elementary school, where children should not only feel safe and accepted but a purposeful demonstration of racism should not be tolerated."

"The free speech rights of students while in school are not the same as the free speech rights of the public. Our sincere hope is that those who visit the District lead by example and model the behaviors we expect from our students," the letter stated.

"Freedom of speech is our First Amendment right - the Confederate flag disrupts and infringes upon rights of students and families and schools have an obligation to ban the flag, if possible, on property to maintain a safe, inclusive, tolerant learning environment for all students," she said.

Board secretary Vannessa Thun said that "the school board and this community are united in our commitment to you and your children.""You are not alone - we are here for you, and we'll continue to do everything within our power that our school is a place where every child feels they belong," she said.

Trustee Jennifer Summers said that she hopes that the community will continue to engage in "open and constructive dialogue on this issue and any other issues" and "treat others with concern and respect and honor others' dignity and rights."

Board members approved funding free breakfasts and lunch for students until such time that there's more information on the passage of a state and federal budget.

As of Sept. 22, Superintendent Adam Bowen said that no state budget has been passed for the 2025-2026 fiscal year, which begins Oct. 1.

Currently, it's not known if Michigan's free school meal program, which is only funded through Sept. 30 and offers universally free breakfast and lunch to all public-school students regardless of income, will continue.

Finance director Pano Arvanitis said that he feels the district is in a financial position where it can "absorb" the cost for the free breakfasts and lunches for a month or two.

He added that everyone is still encouraged to fill out a form for free and reduced lunch, as Title 1, Title II and Title IV money comes from those applications.

Board members accepted the 2024-2025 audit as presented by Kruggel, Lawton & Company, L.L.C.

Revenues in the General Fund were about $21.1 million, with local revenue being 84.97% of revenue. Total expenditures were about $17.5 million, with roughly half of continuing to be instruction.

The fund balance, which was budgeted at $5 million, came in at $5.3 million.

New Buffalo Community Education Foundation Secretary Brian Williams and Vice President Tom Rowland said that they're working on the next phase for the baseball/softball project, which is to build up the area around the complex.

Per a handout, future fundraising plans include individual donors who make a $1,000/$2,500/$5,000 donation or more being recognized with their name etched in glass in a permanent display as a prominent part of the stadium; local businesses being founding sponsors of the new facility with a tax-deductible donation and a $3,000 tax deductible donation being recognized with a name plate on a chairback seat as part of the stadium redesign.

Hosting a summer college baseball team remains a possibility. Plans are to establish this team as a nonprofit structure, with profits of the team being reinvested in the school district and community partners.

Board members heard an update on the Operations Department.

Director Mark German said that recent projects have included redoing the flooring in the administration office, transportation office and seven classrooms; installing a new parking pad for buses in the transportation garage; redoing some of the bathroom partitions in the elementary school and some landscaping at the middle/high school.

Current projects include the baseball/softball fields project, working with the technology department on door access controls and a new camera system and working with Building Trades on a new pole barn.

German said he's also working with a company on doing a facilities assessment and putting together a five-, 10- or 15-year plan on what needs to be replaced and or better maintained.

Board members approved relinquishing the 2025-2026 Title III and Section 41 funds and approve the New Buffalo Area Schools Emergency Operation Plan 2025-2026.

From the Bleachers

COLUMN BY KURT MARGGRAF IN CHICAGO

Ordinarily, I would devote this weeks column to the Chicago Cubs for making the playoffs.

Their season was certainly uneven, but in the end, the Cubs have an opportunity to win a championship. Like all the other teams in the playoffs, their hitters have to get hot, but if they do, they can compete with anyone.

But for this week, the city can't think about anything but the Chicago Bears.

After losing their first two games under new head coach Ben Johnson, the Bears came roaring back Sunday and handily defeated the Dallas Cowboys, 31-14.

The game featured many of the reasons that Bears fans were so optimistic when the season began. Coach Johnson was hired because he had a great offensive mind. Bang!

In the first quarter against the Cowboys, quarterback Caleb Williams handed off to D'Andre Swift who ran toward the line, pivoted, and threw the ball back to Caleb (a version of the old flea flicker) who proceeded to throw the ball about 65 yards down the field to a wide open Luther Burden III, for his first NFL touchdown.

This was after Caleb had hit Rome Odunze with a perfect pass for a 35 yard touchdown and hit Colston Loveland with another perfect pass for 31 yards and a first down. The overthrows that plagued Caleb in the first two games were gone.

The offense that was so vanilla in the first two games became almost spectacular. The defense played a big part of the victory, too.

In the first half, the Cowboys running game was effective. They had a run for significant yardage when all of a sudden one of the most maligned defenders, Tyrique Stevenson, took the ball away from the Cowboys running back and returned the momentum to the Bears.

The Bears middle linebacker, Tremaine Edmunds, has also been under the microscope lately, but Sunday, he participated in fifteen tackles and intercepted passes on two consecutive Dallas drives. This was a complete team victory and helped to calm the nerves of Bear fans, and quite frankly, the Bears themselves.

So, what have Bear fans learned so far this season? I for one, have learned that I want Ben Johnson to be the Bears head coach for decades. Also, I think that Caleb Williams will be the best quarterback the Bears have ever had.

Additionally, I believe the Bears will win a Super Bowl or two in the next decade. I'm an eternal optimist always believing that things will turn out good for the teams I choose to root for, but even us optimists should remember that Rome wasn't built in a day.

So let's all allow young players to have some growing pains before we write them off. Let's remember that patience is a virtue. Let's be more fans than critics. Let's enjoy da Bears.

Leo Tolstoy said, "The two most powerful warriors are patience and time."

Be kind. Talk to you next week. Peace, love, and happiness.

School of American Music welcomes James Thurman

The School of American Music (SAM) is pleased to announce that musician and educator James Thurman has joined its faculty.

Thurman will be teaching banjo, dulcimer, guitar, fiddle, piano, and ukulele to students of all ages and skill levels.

A Louisville, Kentucky, native, Thurman was raised in a musical household. His mother studied piano at the Cincinnati Conservatory, and his father sang and played guitar in a professional combo before World War II. James began piano lessons at six, added ukulele and guitar soon after, and performed as part of a family trio known as The Singin' Thurmans. Over the years, he expanded his instrumental skills, drawing on folk, classical, and popular music traditions.

After more than a decade of traveling across North America and Europe, Thurman settled in California, where he taught music, worked in a boutique guitar shop, and began a long career as a church musician. He now lives in Benton Harbor, Michigan, and serves as worship leader at Peace Lutheran Church in St. Joseph.

Thurman's teaching philosophy emphasizes developing a personal connection to music while also providing a solid foundation in note reading, theory, and technique. He encourages students to explore different genres while pursuing their individual musical interests.

"We are delighted to welcome James to the School of American Music," said Heidi Smith, executive director of SAM. "His wide-ranging musical expertise and passion for nurturing students make him an excellent addition to our faculty."

Lessons with Thurman are now available at the School of American Music, located at 14 Maple Street in Three Oaks. For more information or to register, visit www.schoolofamericanmusic.com or call 269-409-1191. — **STAFF REPORTS**

I always break people's noses with the uppercut, not the hook. — *Gervonta Davis*

Raiders improve to 4-0 in high school football

BY STAN MADDUX

The Red Arrow Raiders remain undefeated in high school football after a 60-0 victory at New Buffalo High School Friday, Sept. 19.

The Raiders (4-0) dominated Lee High School of Wyoming from the very beginning, scoring quickly on their first possession on a 10 yard run by Keio Trimm.

The touchdown was set up by a 52 yard pass completion from quarterback Colten Lijewski to Lucas Forker.

The Raiders after recovering the ball from a blocked punt needed just a few plays before Keith Faust ran the ball nine yards into the end zone.

About mid-way through the second quarter, the Raiders went up 20 to 0 on an eight yard touchdown pass from Lijewski to Cooper Lynch.

That touchdown was set up by Lijewski gaining 45 yards on two separate running plays.

Lijewski struck again less than two minutes later with a 15 yard rushing gain before August Johnson on a hand off took the ball 18 yards into the end zone.

The first half wasn't over until Lijewski connected with Lynch on a 50 yard touchdown pass and Lynch later ran the ball in from the one yard line following a long pass reception by Johnson.

The Raiders scored two more touchdowns in the second half while the defense continued to keep Lee from scoring, holding their offense to less than 100 total yards.

"We're super excited about what the kids are doing," said Raiders Head Coach Matt Johnson.

Prior to the start of the season, Johnson said his players mostly from last year's solid junior varsity team set a goal to win half of their eight regular season games.

He credited their desire to win, hit and remain focused on their next opponent for helping to exceed their expectations.

"We're hoping to keep the train rolling. The attitude and effort is just right where we asked the kids to be," Johnson said.

Lijewski completed 10 of his 16 passes from 212 yards while gaining another 106 yards on the ground.

Lynch caught six passes for 101 yards while Johnson gained 59 yards on seven carries.

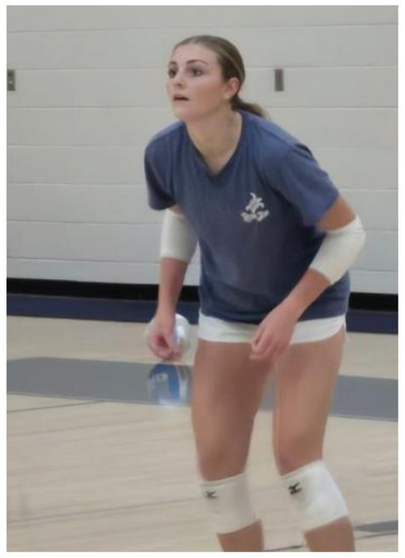
On defense, Trimm and Lijewski each had six total tackles while Forker was involved in three quarterback sacks and two consecutive blocked passes in the second quarter.

Trevor James added five total tackles along with a sack.

The Raiders play again Friday at Fennville.

Johnson said the key to that game will be keeping their fleet footed quarterback from creating scoring opportunities by moving out of the pocket.

"If we can keep him contained, I like our chances," he said.



Raiders off to winning start in first season of girls' volleyball

BY STAN MADDUX

The inaugural season for the Red Arrow Raiders in girls' high school volleyball is off to a winning start.

The varsity team consisting of players from New Buffalo and River Valley high schools was 12 and 7 heading into a tournament at Bridgman last weekend.

"There's so much talent from both schools. We get to have a little bit extra level of play when we play the bigger teams. It's exciting," said Head Coach Carly Barton.

Barton said one of the keys for the Raiders, so far, has been solid play on defense that has helped overcome a lack of height for kills and blocks at the net.

"Sometimes, you go play these big teams, we just look small compared to them but we do a really good job making up for that with our defense. We're a strong defensive team," she said.

The tallest players on the team, who are well under six feet tall, are leading shot blockers Kynzi Brooks and Lydia Denham.

The top scorer is Addison Lynch, an all-conference player as a freshman last year and power hitter from anywhere on the court.

"She's a lefty and she can swing away like there's no tomorrow," Barton said.

The starting setter is Olivia Ackerman, who Barton expects to lead the conference in assists.

Emma Seifert is the libero, a position requiring strong all-around skills especially in areas like defense and communicating on the court.

Barton feels the champion of the conference tournament in their division will be decided between the Raiders and Michigan Lutheran.

She's also optimistic about making a run in the district tournament in early November.

"It's a challenge this year but we're going to be ready for it," she said.

Barton, who was the head girls' volleyball coach at River Valley last year, said the girls have adjusted well to the merger of the programs because some of them are friends and many were teammates already in other already merged sports like girls' basketball.

"It was a very smooth transition. It's worked out really well. It's a good group," she said.

Meagan McNeal live at The Acorn

AN EVENING OF SOULFUL MUSIC AND COMMUNITY ACTION

BY FRANCESCA SAGALA

This year, the area has seen a dramatic increase in its unhoused population.

This includes neighbors sleeping in cars, in tents, or couch-surfing just to survive.

According to David Ball, vice chair of the Neighbor by Neighbor Board of Directors, over 114 people have been reported as being homeless this year, 36 of those being children.

In the first six months of 2025, the nonprofit organization has spent its entire 2024 budget for those who are unhoused and for emergency shelter.

"So, the amount we spent in the first six months was equal to the 20204 budget and we're continuing to exceed that budget we have for emergency shelter," he said.

With the purchase of one ticket, these neighbors can be helped: For the fourth year in a row, internationally acclaimed vocalist Meagan McNeal will take the stage for a one-night-only benefit concert in support of Neighbor by Neighbor, a nonprofit lifeline for residents in crisis, at 8 p.m. Friday, Oct. 10, at The Acorn Center for the Performing Arts at 107 Generations Drive in Three Oaks.

In addition to the area's increase in the unhoused population, Ball said Neighbor by Neighbor has also seen a sharp increase in demand for food and hygiene supplies from its pantry.

Many of those who the organization serves are seniors on fixed incomes, parents working multiple jobs but still unable to cover basic needs, or individuals facing sudden medical or financial emergencies.

"You just think about how so many people are just one paycheck or one instance - it could be one car repair or one big utility bill - away from a crisis... We try to be that safety net for them to make sure they have what they need so they can say employed," Ball said.

Once the crisis is stabilized, Neighbor by Neighbor connects them with resources, skills, and opportunities to help them alongside their journey toward independence.

"We've got a really great GED program and financial literacy - we want to meet them where they are and figure out how they got there and give them the tools to get back on track," Ball said.

Ball said the event will raise funds to give them a "good foundation" to help others during the winter months, when seasonal employment goes away and utility bills are on the rise.

McNeal blends soul, jazz, R&B and gospel into a performance that leaves audiences captivated. Her collaborations include artists such as Common, The O'Jays, and the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, and she's been featured on NBC's "The Voice" and "The Kelly Clarkson Show."

This year, Ball said that the evening will feature local talent: Harbor Country Singers from the School of American Music will be doing backup for two of McNeal's songs.

In addition to her vocals and stage presence, Ball said that McNeal's mission has also made her a good choice for headlining the event.

"She's had challenges in her life and has been down on her luck and reached out to organizations like Neighbor by Neighbor to help her family and now she's successful," he said.

A limited number of VIP tickets for $150, which include access to a pre-show reception at Commune + Market at 105 N. Elm Street in Three Oaks and a reserved seat, are available. Guests will enjoy heavy hors d'oeuvres, wine, and premium reserved seating at the concert.

General admission tickets are $35 and reserved seating ones are $75.

Neighbor by Neighbor invites individuals and businesses to support its mission through event sponsorships ranging from $500 to $10,000. Sponsors receive benefits such as recognition in event materials, programs, and press releases; reserved concert seating; VIP tickets; and, at higher levels, speaking opportunities and custom spotlights. In-kind donations of goods, services, or raffle items are also welcome.

The event will also feature several silent auction items, such as a private dinner, a sailing excursion and bocce lesson. Several "neighborhood baskets," with each one tailored to the area's respective communities, will be raffled off.

For more information, visit www.acornlive.org/events/meagan-mcneal-10-10-25. More information on Neighbor by Neighbor can be found at www.neighborbyneighbor.org.

MAGAZINE ABOUT MICHIGAN CITY MAKES ITS DEBUT

The Michigan City Chamber of Commerce has officially launched "MC Momentum Magazine," a new quarterly publication created to highlight the stories, people, and progress shaping Michigan City's future.

The first issue debuting this fall has Mayor Angie Nelson Deuitch on the cover and is packed with features about the city's rich history and forward momentum.

Highlights from the Fall 2025 issue include:

- Yesterday: A look back at Michigan City's industrial roots and the restoration of the historic Barker Mansion, now featuring a new exhibit on the Haskell & Barker factory.
- Today: An in-depth conversation with Mayor Angie Nelson Deuitch about neighborhood revitalization, economic growth, and her vision for a vibrant Michigan City.
- Tomorrow: A feature on the new La Porte County Career & Technical Education South Campus and the Little Wolves Early Learning Center, spotlighting local students preparing for careers that will drive the city's future.

The magazine also includes the 2025–26 Chamber Membership Directory, making it a resource for networking and connecting with businesses across the region.

"MC Momentum Magazine" gives us the opportunity to showcase the innovation, leadership, and collaboration happening in our community. It's a way to keep members and residents informed while also capturing the energy of Michigan City's future," said MCCC President Kurt Gillis.

The next issue scheduled for release is in December 2025. Both print and digital versions are available. — STAN MADDUX

The Pokagon Fund launches community access station to support grantseekers

The Pokagon Fund is pleased to announce the opening of its Community Access Station, featuring no-cost access to Candid's Foundation Directory and GuideStar for local nonprofits and government entities.

While the Fund will continue its grantmaking activities, the provision of this station aims to empower organizations providing programming in the Fund's service area to more effectively identify and pursue grant opportunities from other philanthropic organizations.

"Many local organizations have limited resources to invest in grant research tools," said

Dan Petersen, executive director of The Pokagon Fund. "By providing access to these comprehensive databases, we hope to enable the growth and sustainability of our community's nonprofits even if TPF funding is not involved in a project."

The Foundation Directory is a comprehensive resource for finding foundations and their giving priorities, while GuideStar provides in-depth profiles of nonprofits, enhancing transparency and collaboration. The Community Access Station is located at The Pokagon Fund offices (821 E. Buffalo Street in New Buffalo) and is available by appointment. Those wishing to access FD and GuideStar must be onsite and cannot do so remotely.

For more information or to schedule a session, please contact Petersen at dpetersen@pokagonfund.org or 269-469-9322. — STAFF REPORTS

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Shared Moments

PHOTO BY KRISTIN E. FATOUROS

As evening approaches, the sun slips toward the horizon, painting the sky in colors no artist can fully capture. At times we are able to share this moment with the ones who matter most—their laughter, their silence, their presence turns the view into something greater than light and shadow. To watch the day end together is to remember that love, like the sunset, deepens when shared.

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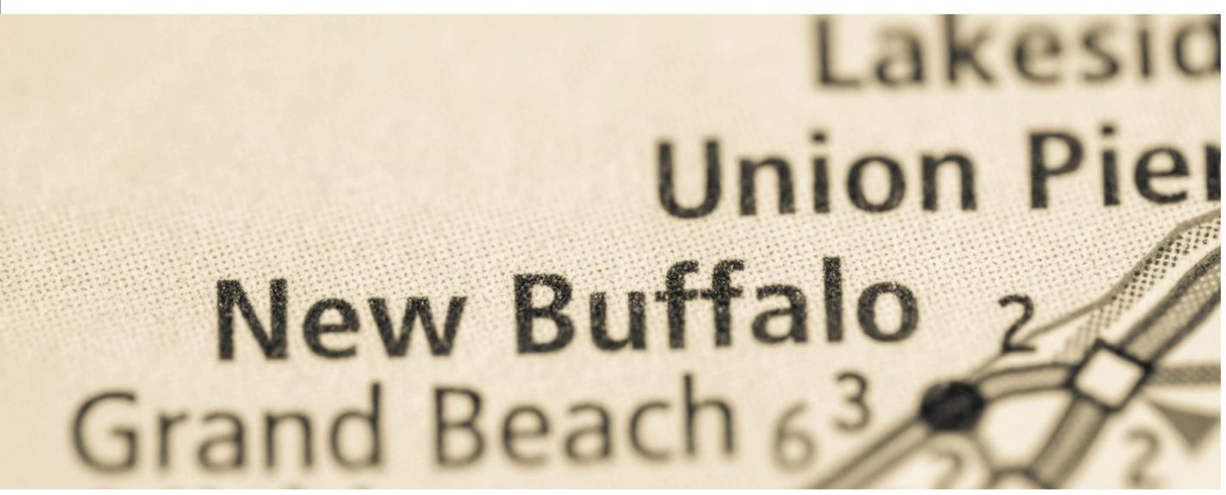

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Firefighters struggle to extinguish large composting pile blaze

BY STAN MADDUX

Firefighters in La Porte on Tuesday, Sept. 23, were in the third day of trying to stop a large public composting pile from burning.

They were called to the over 1,000-foot-long pile of mostly decomposing leaves, grass clippings, trees and branches on Zigler Road near the La Porte County Fairgrounds about 1 p.m. on Sept. 21.

"We've been here ever since," said La Porte Assistant Fire Chief Kelly Burke.

A roughly 150 foot long, 200-foot-wide section of the pile on a 25-acre site was on fire.

Heavy smoke poured from the composting pile while flames often shot up from the ground.

Burke said there was no immediate threat to any structures with the closest being the La Porte County Community Corrections facility several hundred feet away.

A helicopter from the Lake County Sheriff's Office flew in Tuesday morning and dropped about 50 loads of water with each load containing 250 gallons of water, he said.

Water continued to be applied from aerial trucks and at ground level while excavators kept digging into the pile of decaying leaves and brush and spreading the burning material on the ground to be soaked with water.

"There's just an enormous amount of material to move through and sift through and put water on," Burke said.

Burke said burning material in some spots was uncovered 15 to 20 feet deep into the pile.

"It's a vast area of brush, grass, leaves and logs that have been piled up here for years," he said.

Burke said it's going to be a few more days, if not, a week before the fire is extinguished or at least brought to a more manageable level.

Burke said composting pile fires much like burning peat moss in a bog are difficult to extinguish since water soaking into the ground might not be reaching hot spots deeper into the soil.

The cause of the fire was not known.

Burke said spontaneous combustion is one possibility because of heat naturally generated below the ground from organic materials decaying.

The composting pile belongs to the La Porte County Solid Waste District, which allows citizens to dispose of their yard waste there at no cost.

LPCSWW Executive Director Clay Turner speculated a lightning strike also could have been the cause because of storms with lighting passing through the area just a few hours before the fire was reported.

"We're not sure," he said.

The compost pile is now closed to the public until further notice.

A Writer's Life...

DURING THE GOLDEN AGE OF TELEVISION ANIMATION

BY JACK OLESKER

There's a new cat in town...

After my latest exchange with Howard, I reluctantly returned to my office. My in-boxes were pathetically empty. I had no phone messages. Sadly, I'd seen this coming for a long time. I now missed the interaction with writers, the scripts – writing or editing them – being involved with a series and knowing it would have a positive impact on children.

I also felt guilty. I was making a lot of money as a staff writer/story editor at DIC. How could I sit around hour after hour, day after day, week after week, month after month doing nothing and justify being paid?

A knock on my door brought the message I wouldn't have to justify sitting around doing nothing for a month, a week, a day or even an hour more. I called, "Come in."

Lori opened the door and, like a seer, asked, "Did you think we'd let you sit around here doing nothing?"

I answered, "I was starting to wonder."

Lori grinned. "I'm not surprised. It's been a whole hour since you turned in the last Care Bears script." She came in and asked, "Do you know who Heathcliff is?"

Desperate but knowing it was a mistake, I gave the only answer I could. "He was the protagonist in Emily Bronte's novel."

"Very funny, Jack. We all read Wuthering Heights in English Lit 101."

I surrendered. "I give up. Who's Heathcliff?"

Lori placed four floppy discs and four video cassettes on my desk and answered, "He's a cat."

As I stared at the stack, Lori explained, "Specifically, he's Heathcliff the Cat."

I charged headlong into a morass of my own making. "Fat cat, a gourmand, lazy, sarcastic."

Unimpressed, Lori observed, "That's Garfield. Very different from Heathcliff."

I sighed, feeling like a dolt. Lori picked up on this and sat in a chair opposite me, her tone softening. "Don't beat yourself up. You're still new to children's television."

She was right. Plus Lori had been around a long time and knew the business. "We've already produced 65 episodes of Heathcliff and the Catillac Cats."

I knew better than to ask who the Catillac Cats were, figuring I'd find out in due time. As I relaxed, Lori shifted and said, "But you should have known about Heathcliff. The first thing you should have done when you came on staff was research all the series we've produced." Showing me she wasn't saying this just to make me feel bad, Lori added, "If Jean or Andy ask you something about Pole Position or Inspector Gadget or Rainbow Brite you want to know about them in advance."

"Got it," I said, determined to start my research on all the DIC series tonight.

"And," she added, pushing the floppy discs and video cassettes across my desk to me, "since you're going to be story editing the next 21 episodes of Heathcliff and the Catillac Cats, you might as well start with this."

The words were stuck in my throat but she knew how I felt.

Lori stood, said, "Now get to work" and left. I'm pretty sure I saw a faint glint of fairy dust in her wake.

HOROSCOPE

SEPTEMBER 25-OCTOBER 1, 2025

AS INTERPRETED BY SANDY "STAR" BENDT

ARIES MARCH 21—APRIL 19

It will become very clear this week which friendships are beneficial and which ones are destructive. This is the time to clean relationships up and focus on the ones that truly promote wellbeing in your life. Ditch the people that you use to compete or compare yourself with. Choose authenticity.

TAURUS APRIL 20—MAY 20

It is very clear now what you need to be doing and focusing on. This is the time to shut out unnecessary chatter, gossip and negative influences and put your energy into accomplishing chores. Take care of yourself and your home before you take on someone else's responsibilities.

GEMINI MAY 21—JUNE 21

It will become apparent what to put your heart into this week. This is all about opening your heart and mind to the important things in life, like integrity and the spirit of giving. Don't let opinions influence how you treat others. Look deeper and you will see the interconnectedness of all life.

CANCER JUNE 22—JULY 22

Take stock of your living arrangement and space. Does it reflect who and where you are at now? Revamp and resituate things at home to reflect your lifestyle and current outlook. Don't be afraid to get rid of things that no longer suit you or connect you to painful memories.

LEO JULY 23—AUGUST 22

This week it will become clear which social connections are authentic and which ones are just there for show. Focus on the one's that truly feed your spirit and the one's that make you feel connected and secure. Let go of uncertainty and speculations. If you can't get clear answers, move on.

VIRGO AUGUST 23—SEPTEMBER 22

Get ready for some clarity on where you should be investing your time and energy this week. Don't sell yourself short or skimp on the things you need for yourself. Don't let relationships and other people's attitudes overwhelm you. Stick up for yourself and your contributions.

LIBRA SEPTEMBER 23—OCTOBER 22

Be generous to yourself this week. You are normally putting relationships and other people first but now is the time to take care of yourself. Put your focus on the things that are important to you. Go where your own road leads you. Let go of fulfilling other people's dreams and focus on your own.

SCORPIO OCTOBER 23—NOVEMBER 21

It is very important to spend some time alone this week and think things through on your own. You may not realize how much someone else's thoughts and ideas are clouding your own better judgment until you step back from them. Be true to yourself when making decisions.

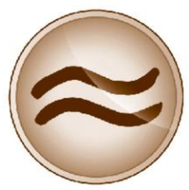
SAGITTARIUS NOVEMBER 22—DECEMBER 21

It will become apparent that you need to network, socialize and get out in the world more. Expand your spheres of influence. Broaden your horizons by interacting with new people and new information sources. Don't believe everything but investigate and explore differing opinions.

CAPRICORN DECEMBER 22—JANUARY 19

If you have been wondering what the truth is behind other people's actions, you can expect some clarity this week. Standing on principle doesn't always mean cutting people off, sometimes it is important to listen and let people express their ideas fully before discarding them.

AQUARIUS JANUARY 20—FEBRUARY 18



You can expect a lesson in giving and receiving this week. Just because you think something is a great gift or a big help to someone, it may not be. This is about really listening to people and seeing situations for what they really are. Wait and listen before you commit or invest in something.

PISCES FEBRUARY 19—MARCH 20

This week it is important to look at what and why you are committing to and obligating yourself with. Are the things you're doing and giving a true reflection of you or are you trying to fit into socially held values and ideas? Be generous of spirit but don't support what isn't right for you.

I have never felt salvation in nature. I love cities above all. — *Michelangelo*

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Fill in the grid so that every row, column and 3x3 box contains the numbers 1 through 9.

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		2		4		5	8	
					1	3	7	
	2				7			
5		4		6		7		
	3		5					
4		6						
		7	3					
	8		1	7				

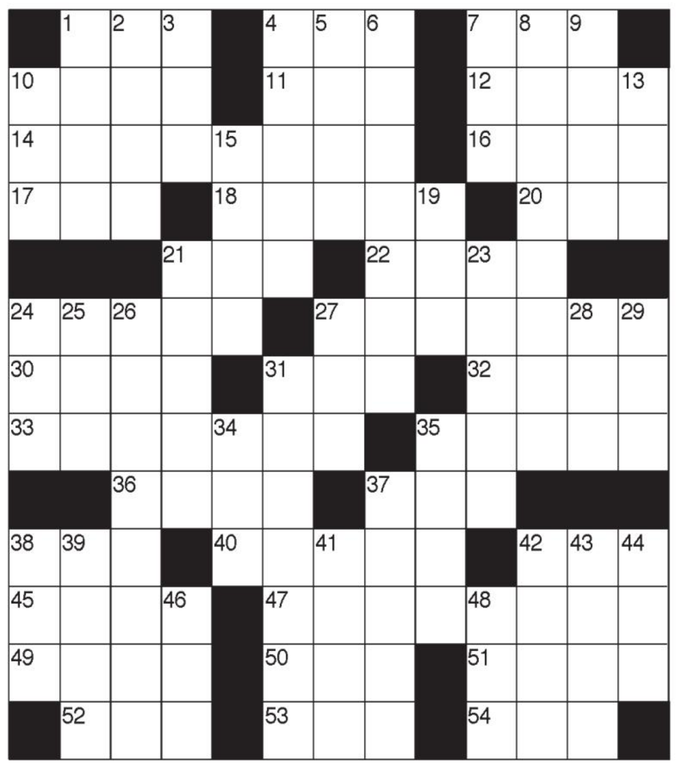
CROSSWORD PUZZLE

ACROSS

1 Tally
4 Basketball Assn. of America
7 Monkey
10 Jason's ship
11 Imitate
12 Famous zeppelin
14 Despot
16 Jutelander
17 Poetess Lowell
18 Narrow
20 Prohibit
21 Swed. county
22 Old-time firing pin
24 Grave
27 Toy
30 Ring of light
31 Berne's river
32 Medicinal herb
33 Proportionally assess
35 State (Ger.)
36 Anthology (abbr.)
37 Exclamations of delight
38 Hebrew letter
40 Comedy
42 "The Jungle Book" python
45 Feed the kitty
47 Hindu queen
49 Not (Lat.)
50 Turk. title
51 Religious image
52 Compass direction
53 Serum (pref.)
54 Sheep's cry

DOWN

1 Neat
2 Agency (abbr.)
3 Fly larva
4 Stick
5 Apocrypha (abbr.)
6 Air supply
7 Signed (abbr.)
8 Strauss opera
9 Sayings (suf.)
10 Amer. Dental Assn. (abbr.)
13 Marsh
15 Axillary
19 54 (Rom. numeral)
21 Discover
23 Scand. people
24 Drain
25 Possessive pronoun
26 Keeler (2 words)
27 No (Scot.)
28 Poly. beefwood
29 But
31 Uncle of Jason
34 Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms (abbr.)
35 Afr. tree
37 Pickled bamboo shoots
38 Defiant shout
39 Son of Judah
41 Choler
42 N.Z. parrot
43 Wild ox
44 Own (Scot.)
46 Gelderland city
48 Cut of beef



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There are many natural alternatives to popping a pill for every ill. Nature offers the answer to many common ailments such as colds, flu, headaches, fever, pain, nausea, digestive issues and so on. When our bodies are not in balance and are inflamed, toxic or compromised in some way, it gives us warning signs that we feel as symptoms. We need to learn how to treat the real cause, not just the symptom. Herbal antibiotics can put the body into a balance, and can kill the bad bacteria, while not harming the good bacteria.

Many drugs that are given for symptom treatment are bacteria resistant. No matter how much Rx you throw at it, the bacteria win. MRSA, Staph, certain Flu and other Gram-positive bacteria are some strains that certain drug treatment will not help at all. Here is the scenario: You aregiven the RX for congestion or feeling sick, nothing heals. You go back to the doctor 10 days later sicker than ever, and get another RX. Things get worse, now new more complicated symptoms are arising.

It continues this way for a while until you are physically, mentally, and emotionally exhausted, and still have the original infection these were meant to treat. On top of all this, your microbiome in your gut has now been destroyed. Antibiotics destroy ALL bacteria. It is non selective. Anti – (against) Biotic (Life.) Even the good bacteria that we depend on for good health have all been targeted to death.

Digestion now becomes a big problem. Sad to say, but you have just demolished your microbiome and it is going to take a good while to rebuild it, unless you are very adamant in diet and lifestyle for repair. Symptoms that you have ruined your gut microflora include: digestive issues like gas, bloating, diarrhea, and/or constipation, as well as other effects like mood, sleep, skin, and weight disorders, unexplained fatigue, food intolerances or allergies, and increased sugar cravings. Some severe health problems such as irritable bowel syndrome (IBS) and inflammatory bowel disease (IBD) can happen.

Strengthening your immune system is the best scenario. Eating whole foods and ridding processed foods. But if you do get sick, try nature first. Herbs like Ginger, Echinacea, Garlic, Turmeric, Thyme, Oregano,Licorice, Rosemary, Usnea, Juniper, Lemon Balm and honey are all good choices to reach for first. It is wise to have a good herbal book on natural antibiotics for your home. Doing your own research is very important.

Getting high quality herbs are also important. You want them grown NON GMO, without pesticides. Think about the quality of your RX. Many are filled with dyes, chemicals, GMO ingredients and allergens.

Nothing here is meant to diagnose, treat, prevent or cure. Don't take herbs when you are pregnant, lactating, or on specific Rx. Check with your healthcare practitioner if you are not sure. We have to each be discerning when something needs medical intervention.

The point here is to know that nature should be what we choose at first symptom.

PET OF THE WEEK

LUCY

If you love the "The Golden Girls", you'll love Lucy. At almost 12 years old and just around 41 pounds, she acts like a puppy when she sees her leash for a nice, leisurely walk. Her vaccinations are up-to-date, she is spayed, but she does have some special needs. As excited as she gets, Lucy has some back leg issues, but would love to find her forever home. She is efficient, very calm, and good around all people that understand her needs, just not with cats. Lucy would love to live in a home without stairs. Make Lucy part of your home today.

AVAILABLE AT THE MICHIANA HUMANE SOCIETY

LOCAL INTELLIGENCE
New Buffalo Times
— SINCE 1942 —

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PUBLIC NOTICES

GRAND BEACH NATURE PRESERVE TOWN HALL MEETING

At 5:00 p.m. (Eastern), Friday, October 3, 2025, the Village of Grand Beach will hold a Town Hall Meeting at Village Hall, 48200 Perkins Blvd, Grand Beach, MI 49117, to discuss the Grand Beach Nature Preserve Master Plan. A copy of the master plan will be posted on the village website approximately one week prior to the town hall. We encourage all residents to attend.

AUCTION
Monday, October 13 10:00AM
742 S Whittaker St.
New Buffalo, Mi 49117

Two 1997 SeaDoo Bombardier WaveRunners with double trailer
2024 Toyota GR 86
2014 BMW 435i Convertible
1961 Ford 100 Black
1969 Ford Mustang

Runners, walkers fired up about public safety

BY FRANCESCA SAGALA

For the fourth year in a row, Jennifer Brannigan Ward and her family ran a few miles on an early September morning in support of the area's first responders at Friends of New Buffalo Township Fire's annual Fired Up 5K, which took place Saturday, Sept. 20.

"It's a good family activity on a fall morning," she said.

Branningan Ward, who was there with five family members, including a cousin from Australia, was named the overall female winner, with a time of 24:56.3.

Reclaiming his title for the second year in a row as first place winner was Byron Graves with a time of 19:53, followed by Adam Gonen with a time of 20:22.2 in second and Sam Dale in third with a time of 21:15.3.

"I figured I had to come back – I guess all the high schoolers are at a track meet today, so let us old guys have a shot at it, Graves, who had done a 10K the previous weekend and was headed to one next month in Chesterton, said.

Gonen, who was visiting Dale from New York, said he'd never run a 5K before.

"I couldn't get first, that guy was too fast - we were close the first half and then he didn't slow down but I did," he said.

Like Graves, Dale was a returning runner to the 5K.

"We're happy to be here, it's a beautiful Saturday morning and we're ready to go back to the house and get some breakfast - our friends were out on the lawn cheering us on drinking beers and we'll be doing the same shortly," he said.

Runners and walkers wound through a course that included the nonmotorized trail on Red Arrow Highway and the backroads of Union Pier.

This year, Julie Flick, president of the Friends of New Buffalo Township Fire, said there were about 100 runners and walkers, which included several repeat ones.

Proceeds from the 5K, as well as funds that are donated to the organization, are used to buy service medals for firefighters who've been with the department for 10 to 15 years, food and water for them when they're out on long calls. Station gear and T-shirts as an incentive for making calls and sometimes equipment when the township can't provide it. In the past, they've also purchased dry suits for water rescues.

Recently, they purchased individual thermal imaging cameras for every truck. At the 5K, fire chief Jamie Flick said that the department will also be asking for new nozzles for every truck.

"This is our biggest fundraiser for us during the year," Julie, who said the Friends have been around for around 15 years, said.

The department recently added two other full-time firefighters in addition to Jamie: Peyton Lijewski and Noah Sharum.

There will be a fundraiser at Nancy's by Lake in New Buffalo from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Sunday, Sept. 28, during which 100 percent of food and beverage sales will be given back to the Friends and the Raiders' football team.

James Ward accepts a medal at the awards ceremony at Timothy's Restaurant's parking lot

The Ward family after the race

Township Fire Chief Jamie Flick thanks the crowd for their support

Friends of New Buffalo Township Fire President Julie Flick thanks the runners and walkers

The Berrien County Sheriff's Office ensures the safety of runners and walkers

New Buffalo Township Supervisor Michelle Heit thanks the crowd for their support at the awards ceremony

Runners wind through the backroads of Union Pier

Runners and walkers view the results after the race

Runners and walkers of all ages crossed the finish line

Runners are off to the races in Union Pier

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Neighbor by Neighbor

Friday, October 10th, 2025

8PM EST | The Acorn Theater

6PM VIP Event at Commune + Market
Wine & Heavy Appetizers

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Neighbor by Neighbor is a lifeline for meeting the immediate needs of our most vulnerable residents. We mitigate crisis, empower our neighbors and strengthen our community.

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With a Special Guest Appearance by
The Harbor Country Singers
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TICKETS:

For tickets and more info visit:
https://www.acornlive.org/

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Visit: www.neighborbyneighbor.org to learn more.

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